

## FRANCOPHONIE WEEK IN TANZANIA

“Le français, une langue partagée”

Thirteen diplomatic missions in Tanzania are jointly organising cultural and sport events to celebrate the International Week of the “Francophonie” starting from March 20th to March 31st, 2012, as well as the International Day of Francophonie on the 20th of March, 2012.

Fifty Six member states of the International Organisation of Francophonie (OIF) and 19 observer members who share in the French language celebrate Francophonie worldwide with an objective of promoting French language within existing linguistic and cultural diversity.

Accredited Embassies of the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mozambique, Belgium, Vietnam, Canada, Egypt, Switzerland, France, Burundi, Rwanda, Consulates of Djibouti, Seychelles and Comoro** are organising various cultural events and lectures to celebrate the Francophonie at various places of Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Zanzibar.

- The opening ceremony is to be held at Forodhani, Slipway in Masaki - Dar es Salaam on March 20th, 2012 by H.E. Mr Juma Alfani Mpango, Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Congo and will be followed by a music performance by a Congolese band, *Junior Ringo Kalunde & Band*. The Guest of Honour is Hon. Mr. Abdillahi Jihad Hassan, Minister for Information, Culture, Tourism and Sports of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar.
- On March 23rd, 2012, H.E. the Ambassador of France, Mr. Marcel Escure, will invite Dr. Samuel Fonkam Azu, President of Election Cameroon to present the OIF aims to secure democracy, Human Rights and the rule of Law to prevent conflicts, accompany crisis exit and transition to democracy and consolidate peace. This symposium will be held at the Alliance française Dar es Salaam
- On March, 24<sup>th</sup>, the talented Ivorian singer, dancer and percussionist **Dobet Gnahore** will introduce her latest album by performing on stage at Goethe Institut, Upanga. She will be accompanied by her musicians.
- Alliance française Dar es Salaam invited, for the occasion, a French theatre company **Cie Pied La Route** who will present on March 28<sup>th</sup>, the adaptation of the late Ivorian novelist Ahmadou Kourouma’s novel *Allah n’est pas obligé*. The stories of a child-soldier and the ones of real warlords in Liberia and Sierra Leone in early 90’s. The play will be held in French with English subtitles.
- A competition of French Language has been organised all over the country since February, gathering more than 1,700 students participants. The award ceremony will be held at the Alliance Française on the 31st of March.

Under an initiative of three former African Heads of States made in 1970, namely Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia, Hamad Diori of Niger as well as Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia, 21 member states agreed on a convention establishing the ACCT which eventually became OIF (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie) in 1988. OIF is the organisation of those who share French language, to say it in French “**Ceux qui ont le Français en partage.**” The OIF has political, cultural and economic objectives. Its four missions have been defined by its members states as follows:

- promotion of French language and of linguistic and cultural diversity
- promotion of peace, democracy, and human rights
- support to education, training, higher education and research
- Sustainable development and solidarity.

Today, French is either the first or second language to more than 200 million people worldwide, half of them living in the African continent and is an official language in most of international and regional organisations, including the African Union.

In Tanzania, a rising number of students at all levels and of professionals are learning French. This interest for French language can only be praised in a country which has several French speaking neighbours, which endeavours to develop its tourism industry, and which has shown its strong commitment to participate in African economical and political integration. Let us highlight that 2 members of OIF – Rwanda and Burundi – joined the East African Community on the 1st of July 2007. As a result of this interest, a 3 years action plan (still on going) for the training of teachers of French language has been designed between the French Government, the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the University of Dar Salaam, and the Open University of Tanzania, and is currently implemented.

This Francophonie season is an international event to promote cultural diversity through francophone language. Indeed, French language is the medium through which a wide range of people and nations express the variety and the originality of their culture. It is a space for dialogue, and it grows richer through the contact with other cultures and languages (English, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, etc). French is a universal language whose numbers of speakers is continuously growing. And this dialogue of cultures in a global word which tends towards uniformisation has a name: cultural diversity.